



Create Your Own State Park Birding Area

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Birds are commonly found in our State Parks. Your park's Birding Area can provide habitat for many species of birds by incorporating food sources, water sources, nesting sites, and cover or protection for our feathered friends. Remember the more variety you are able to provide, the greater variety of birds you will have!

Did You Know?

- Over **450 species of birds** have been documented in Maryland, with more than two hundred different species of birds nesting and breeding in the state.
- Several Maryland State Parks are considered to be Maryland "**Birding Hot Spots**". These include Sandy Point State Park, Point Lookout State Park and Hart Miller Island State Park.

Activities

- Plant Native Trees, Shrubs & Plants-** One of the best ways to provide year-round food for birds is to plant native plants. Many types of birds will feed on the seeds, berries and nectar that these plants provide, or on the insects that are also attracted to those plants. You may also supplement wild food sources in your park with bird feeders.
- Create a Bird Feeding Station-** There are many different types of bird feeders that you can add to your bird feeding station. You may wish to provide a *seed tube feeder* (for sunflower seeds), *sock feeder* (for nyjer thistle seed), a *suet feeder* (for suet blocks) or even a *hummingbird feeder* (for sugar water nectar). Different kinds of birds prefer different kinds of food. Feeders can be purchased commercially, or you can make one by recycling or reusing common items from around your home. Be creative!
- Provide a Water Source for Birds-** Your birding area should have a source of water for birds to drink from and bathe in. This could be a birdbath, pond or water garden. Just like bird feeders, there are many kinds of water features. Bird baths can sit on a pedestal, be hanging or attached to railing on a deck. You may also use a shallow dish on the ground filled with water and a few rocks. You can even make a bird bath from a stump or log in your yard. Bird baths do not need to be deep. Be sure to clean out your bird bath regularly. Empty the water every few days and refill with fresh water. Be creative- You may be able to make your birdbath by recycling or reusing something you already have at home!
- Build a Birdhouse or Nest Box-** After learning which birds are commonly found in your park, or some you would like to attract to the area, build a nest box for them to use to lay eggs and raise their young. You may also find nest boxes available for purchase, if you are unable to build one yourself. It is best to select a nest box that is functional, not only decorative. Here are a few suggestions of birds that you might wish to provide a nest box for: American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Mourning Dove and Purple Martin.
- Start Your Birding "Life List"-** Take some time to observe and listen for the birds found in or near your park. Start a "Life List" of birds you have identified from your home. Use a field guide or identification app to help you learn the characteristics of different birds. What are some of the common birds at your park?

